

August 27, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Albert Marshall and I am an elder and knowledge keeper from Unama'ki. I represent the elders of this island when it comes to environmental matters. I am writing to you about the proposed sale of public land for the purpose of mining for copper and metals in Beechmont and Coxheath. As you know, the government is legally and morally required to consult with First Nations communities about the transfer of land that rests on the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. As guardians and stewards of Unama'ki for centuries upon centuries, the voice of Mi'kmaq People must be heard.

We are extremely concerned about the environmental impacts of mining so close to residential homes, the Sydney River watershed, and the Bras d'or Lakes UNESCO biosphere (on which Eskasoni is situated). Fish and wildlife are dependent on clean air, water, and healthy forests. The pollution that would occur from mining would have a devastating effect on all nearby populations. It would also negatively impact our ability to engage in traditional activities such as hunting, trapping, fishing, and medicine-gathering, to name a few.

Mother Earth needs to be protected and cared for by all. As elected leaders, you have a responsibility to ensure that the possibility of "economic development" (which is highly unlikely) does not come at the cost of a toxic legacy that lasts generations - as we have seen before on this island.

CBRM will need to accept all liability for any harm caused to the land, water, and human health should copper/metals mining proceed in the Beechmont/Coxheath area.

True reconciliation involves understanding and promoting the values of the Mi'kmaq People and protecting their interests. The proposed copper/metals mine does not fit with our beliefs or hopes for the future of Unama'ki.

Sincerely,

Albert Marshall



Eskasoni, NS